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The ValleyStar

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APRIL 19, 2001

Student finds birth mother

■ **ADOPTION:** Student helps reunite lost souls with their birth parents.

By LINDA TOPDJIAN
STAR REPORTER

Kim Johnson sat in the classroom in junior high at age 11, wondering why she did not feel a sense of wholeness, as if something in her life were truly missing.

A full-time student at Valley College, Johnson, age 30, majoring in psychology, with a career as a therapist in the adoption field and a single parent of a 7-year-old daughter, went through that experience.

Through the years, she continued to feel a sense of not connecting with her adopted mother, Marilou Johnson, even though she was adopted at six weeks of age.

"My mother was very supportive of my search for my birth mother. I was very lucky in that aspect, because there are some adoptive parents that would never accept it," Johnson said.

In May of 2000, Johnson started her search for her birth mother.

At first it was difficult, and then through the Internet and registering her name and city of birth on the many websites for adopted adults to search for their birthparent, Johnson received e-mail from Eureka, Calif., from Bobbi Crocker, who also is an adoptee, also from Eureka.

Crocker used her resources to help locate Johnson's birth mother's name, Alice Camp. Johnson sent a letter in September to her birth mother and by December a first meeting was set up for Johnson and her daughter, Caitlin, to meet her new grandma.

Johnson stayed five days in Sacramento at her birth mother's home and also met one of her two sisters and a brother; the other sister lives in Alaska.

"My birth mother is not a replacement of the mom who raised me; she's an addition who enriches my life and completes my identity," Johnson said.

The two exchanged gifts; Johnson gave her mother a photo album of her childhood from birth to present day. Johnson's mother gave her a heart shaped locket on a chain that opens to hold two small photos of both mothers.

Johnson met several of her other relatives related to Alice Camp, who welcomed them immediately with love and acceptance.

"I was out on the porch, watching my daughter and birth family through the sliding glass door, thinking about how well the reunion was going," Johnson said. "I looked up at the stars, when this overwhelming sense of wholeness came over

SEE ADOPTION, PAGE 4

Olé, Olé



Folklorico dancers, Gavy, 14, and Denise, 13, demonstrate their talents during Community Celebration Day hosted by Woodcraft Rangers, an after school program, held at Los Angeles Valley College on April 7.

Cathy Koebel, Staff Reporter

Students' merits rewarded by Deans

AWARDS: Friends and family gather to recognize the academic achievements of Valley's honor students.

By SOTIVEAR SIM
STAR REPORTER

Students, faculty, and family members swarmed into the dimly lit Monarch Hall accompanied by the musical styling of Mi Hyn Chun on the piano for the annual Dean's Reception to honor students of high academic standing.

Over the soft din of people conversing the sound of fifty years of history echoed through the halls, remnants of past faces with unlimited potential. Those same faces sat there in the audience reminiscent of the same dedication to achievement and excellence.

If there is but one word that sums up the Dean's reception it is "potential energy."

"There is no shortage of energy within this room," said Dr. Sue Carleo Voce President of Academic Affairs, referring to California's energy crisis. "Webster states that energy is the ability to do work and overcome resistance," she said in an analogy praising the hard work of the students being honored.

The reception was more than just an event to honor our students, but it was also a chance to applaud Valley for all that it has done. During the speeches by President Tyree Weider and other faculty members they took the opportunity to vocalize the virtues of our campus and its bright future.

The crowd cheered when Weider spoke of the recent passing of the Prop A bond

SEE RECEPTION, PAGE 4

It's more than adaptive PE

■ **EXERCISE:** Instructor helps students with disabilities.

By ANDREA ZOLLMAN
STAR REPORTER

Adaptive physical education instructor James Gayton is supportive and fosters an environment in which emotional, as well as physical, development is encouraged.

Gayton, who started the program at Valley about 22 years ago, only teaches adaptive physical education. He says his classes are open to people with any disability: physical, emotional or learning. He says that the whole idea of the program is to give students a place to work out.

"I think this particular class helps a person with a disability more than any other class on campus," Gayton says.

While students must fulfill the

requirements of the class, says Gayton's assistant, Laurie Ross, they can work around their individual schedules.

To meet the needs of the student, they will usually adapt the schedule in any way they can, Gayton says.

In a room in the South Gym crammed with stationary bicycles, weight machines and other exercise equipment, about 15 students of varying ages and with a variety of disabilities work on their physical fitness, including those in wheel chairs and those who are ambulatory.

Bruce Tolbert has been in Gayton's class for at least three years and says that the class is a relief and a godsend. William Castro, Tolbert's personal assistant, says that the class has helped Tolbert immensely.

Kimberly Horton, another of Gayton's students, says she originally came to Valley because of the adaptive physical education program. Horton, who was born

with cerebral palsy and navigates around in a wheelchair, says she has been in Gayton's class for at least five years.

"I don't walk at all, so using this machine is a big deal to me," Horton says as she pedals her legs on an exercise machine that works both her legs and arms.

Daniel Jacobs says that he has been in Gayton's class longer than he can remember. Jacobs says, "Jim is a good teacher, and so is Laurie." Ira Langbaum takes the class because he says he has high blood pressure and needs to lose weight. He says one of the reasons most people come to the class is for support.

"Jim Gayton works for us all and tries for us all," Langbaum says. He says that they all try to help one another. They meet and talk, as well as exercise.

"This is the get along place of Valley College," Gayton says.

InsideStar



Page 7 Spring to Life

■ An adventure experienced through the eyes of two students during their spring break.

Page 2 China Controversy

■ The incident with China over returning our spy plane is far from over. Who is at fault? Did we really apologize?

EDITORIAL:

Tune into reality,
tune out of reality TV

With an impending strike among actors, writers and directors, Hollywood's TV and movie studios are rushing all types of projects into production. Unfortunately, these projects include the now common reality TV programs made popular last year with "Survivor."

Since then just about every television studio has aired their wannabe rendition of the original "Survivor." Among the reasons we are seeing more and more of these kinds of shows are because of the fact that they do not rely much on writers.

Networks are stocking up on these shows primarily because of the fear of a Writers Guild of America strike that will all but cripple the sitcom and drama line-ups. Even if this is the case enough is enough.

There doesn't seem to be an end to these tasteless shows though. Two more of these shows are premiering this week including NBC's "The Weakest Link," which is pretty much one part "Survivor" and one part "Who wants to be a Millionaire."

The other show to make its debut is UPN's "Chains of Love" that takes after "Survivor," "Big Brother" and "Blind Date."

So why do these seemingly identical shows generate so much viewer ship? Well, why do people stop to see a terrible car accident? The reason is because it's in our nature to view the extent of people's behavior.

It's a curious phenomenon whenever a high-speed chase interrupts the regular programming; everyone suddenly becomes enthralled waiting to see the outcome, knowing full well it's almost impossible to evade police with a helicopter following the perps.

The fixation with reality shows generates most of its popularity from the fact that it provides a realistic environment with a twist of fantasy. Who among us wouldn't like to win a million dollars or be chained to a group of beautiful women and men?

Once again, it's simply our nature to engage in third person viewing.

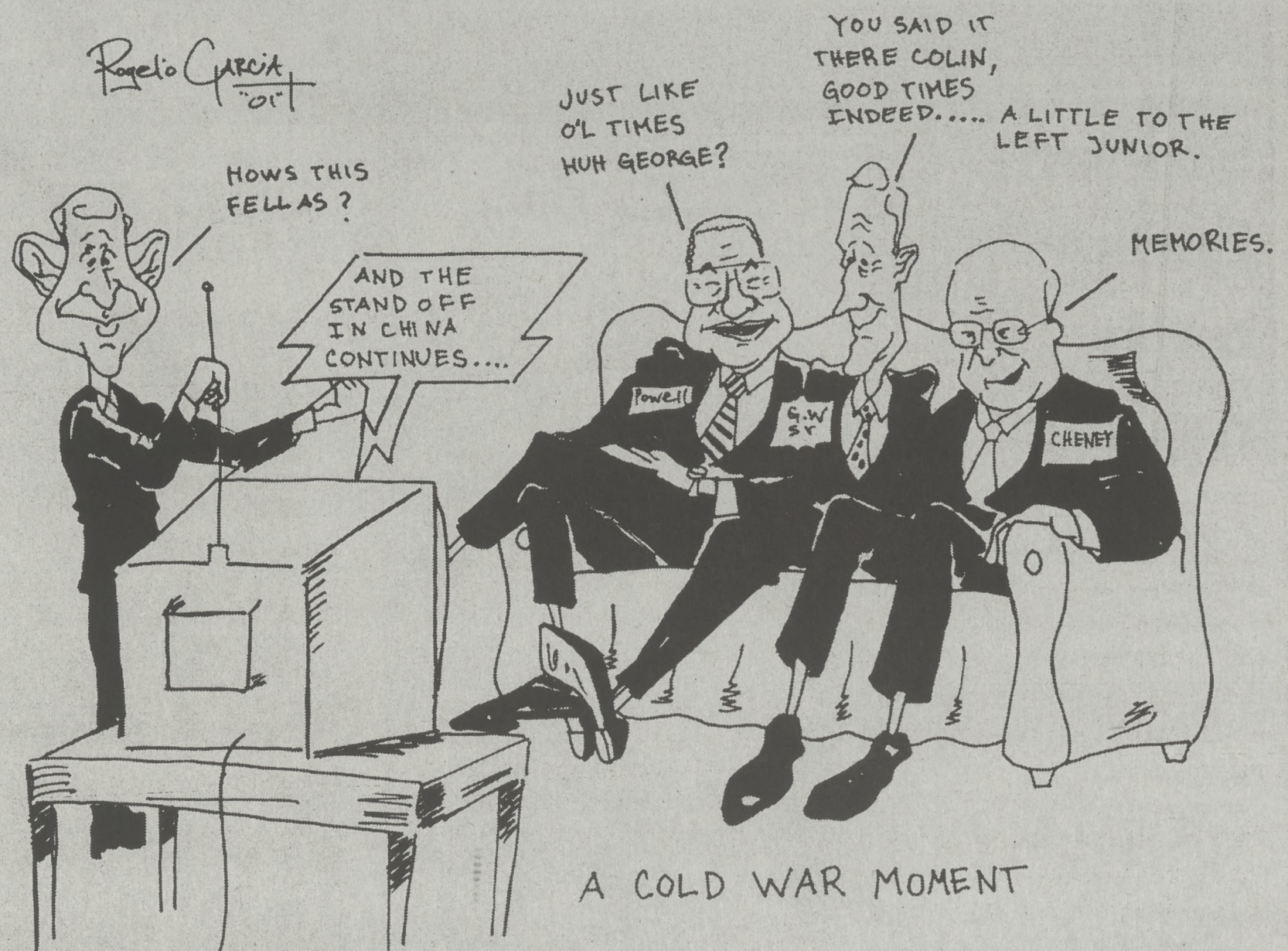
By watching these shows we can essentially control the amount of reality that we take in, without the risk of humiliation and ridicule.

A good example would be when you're watching "Who wants to be a Millionaire" and you begin swearing at the person who guessed the wrong answer.

This behavior is not necessarily a bad characteristic, but it does prevent most of us from actually experiencing our own reality.

We need to begin minimizing the amount time we spend watching other people living their lives and begin enjoying our own.

Besides, how pathetic is it watching someone else having fun or winning a million bucks.



Harmony gained by diplomacy

By ROGELIO GARCIA
STAR REPORTER

Those of us who are too young to remember the Cold War era received a vivid glimpse into the past last week when a crew of U.S. spies were held hostage in China for 11 days. The incident quickly escalated into a diplomatic game of power, arrogance and responsibility with an outcome that seemed to favor both sides, but failed to show one crucial ingredient: honor.

The incident occurred on the morning of April 1, when an American EP-3E reconnaissance plane neared the headquarters of China's South Sea Fleet in the port of Zhanjiang. Suddenly, two Chinese F-8 fighter planes spotted the crew of American spies and proceeded to fly under the U.S. EP-3E. The events that followed produced two versions of events, both ending in the death of Chinese fighter pilot When Wang Wei.

According to Beijing officials, the American plane made a sharp left dip, clipping the tail off the Chinese fighter jet. The second Chinese

pilot, Zhao Yu, claims the U.S. plane deliberately banked left, causing Wang's plane to plummet into the Pacific Sea. The United States, however, claims the responsibility lies with the Chinese. In the version released by the Pentagon last week, the EP-3E plane was following a straight course when Wang's jet disrupted the airflow across the wing of the U.S. plane, causing it to dip and clip Wang's tail.

In any case, the American EP-3E reconnaissance plane sustained damage to its nose cone and to two of its propellers during the collision. The U.S. plane plunged 8,000 feet before the 21 men and three women crew regained control and landed in the nearest airfield in Lingshui, in the Hainan Islands, just off the coast of China. They were then picked up and held hostage by the Chinese government, who demanded an apology from the American government. Once the U.S. received notification that their spies were not being let out of China, the Bush administration began making demands of their own, including the immediate release of the U.S. reconnaissance crew and the EP-3E spy plane.

This is where the competing governments engaged in a dangerous standoff. While the U.S. is the world's lone superpower, China is a country with a long history and deep national pride. So who would fold first? Most would believe that China, with a weaker government and an unstable economy, would give in to the larger more powerful United States. But if history has taught us anything it has taught us to never underestimate the seemingly weaker adversaries: Germany, Iraq.

Thankfully, on April 12 China released all 24 of the U.S. hostages after the U.S. released a carefully tailored "regret" for all that had transpired during the diplomatic episode. Secretary of State Collin Powell who, from the beginning, stated that the U.S. "bears no responsibility" for the crash later delivered a statement to the press that stated, "We regret that the Chinese plane did not get down safely, and we regret the loss of life of the Chinese pilot." One would think that the U.S., having the most resources and power, could make a good example to the rest of the world and utter two simple words: I'm Sorry!!

Voice of the People

The campus does have a voice. Let it be heard. Write letters to the Valley Star and have them published

*It's important that you leave a name and a phone number.

The ValleyStar

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Karla S. Gutierrez
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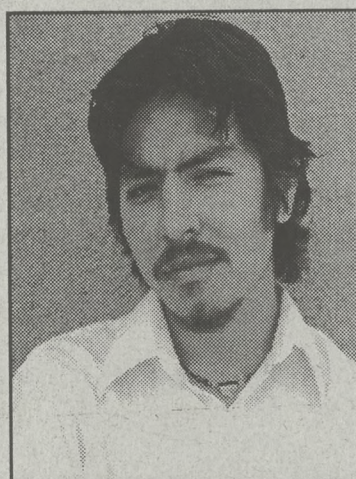
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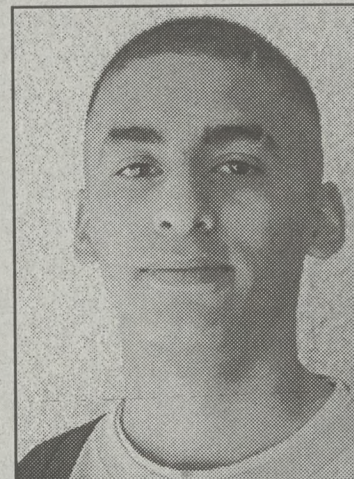
CampusView

Compiled by Samantha Kuppig and
Rogelio Garcia

Were you aware of the hostage situation in
China and what do you think about it?

It shows an increasing tension between China, the US and Taiwan. I know a war between the three countries is inevitable.

Alex Godinez, 22,
Anthropology and philosophy major



I fell scared because we have a dumbass President, but I think if we go to war with China we'd annihilate them.

Roman Latona, 19,
undecided major



I was aware of what's going on, but I tried to avoid it because I don't agree with anything our government does. I distrust the media.

Ruth Cardenas, 21,
undecided major



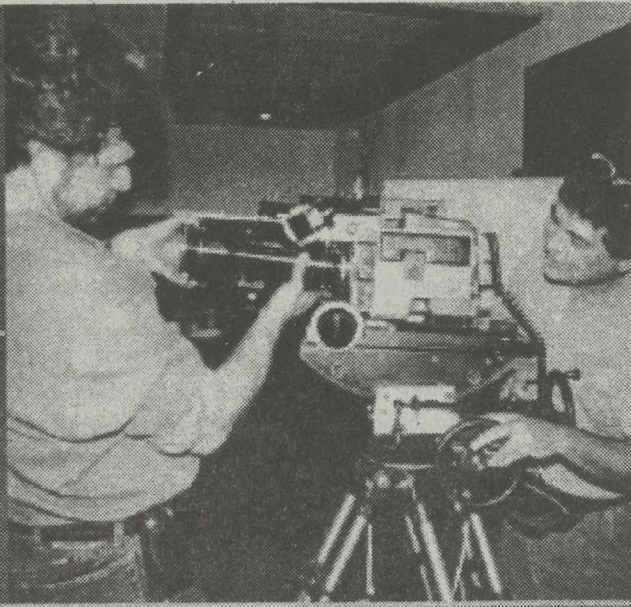
I was thrilled to hear that they were released so that they could celebrate Easter with their families.

Sara Peglow, 23,
Psychology major

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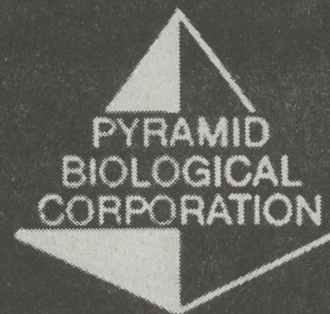
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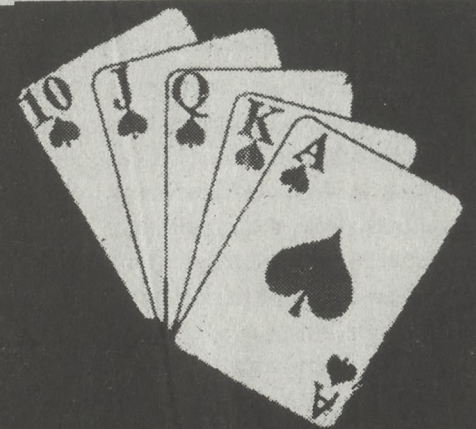
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Samantha Kuppig/Valley Star

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this system. Any card with a magnetic strip can open the door, and the thieves can follow the customer into the vestibule locking the door behind them.

The best advice of police is to go to one of their stations, but if you choose another location, be aware of the dangers and take the proper precautions.

In addition to safety benefits, there are also financial benefits.

If you are a credit union member there is no service charge. For all other bank members the fee is comparable to other ATM locations.

According to the Bank Administration Institute's Task Force, 49 percent of ATM robberies occur between 7 pm and midnight.

The following tips are from the National Security Institute.

- Familiarize yourself with the machine before you use it so you can complete your transaction quickly.
- Never approach an ATM if the lights at the site are not operating.
- Never let others observe you punch in your personal identification number (PIN), and use your body to shield the keypad.
- Don't choose an obvious PIN such as your birth date or Social Security number.
- Memorize your PIN. Never write it down or give it to anyone.
- Never count your money at the ATM or leave with your wallet or cash exposed.
- Lock the right hand door of your car at drive up ATMs so nobody can jump in your car while you're busy using the machine.
- Never approach an ATM if you see suspicious people near the machine or if you have any doubts, fears, or concerns for your safety.

Reception

CONT'D FROM PAGE ONE

that will ensure Valley millions of dollars to renovate the campus. There were promised of improved facilities, computer labs, and building a more technologically advanced campus. But nothing got a louder cry of approval than when President Weider said, "We will confront the issue with the bathrooms."

Highlights of the reception were the dance performances by Valley's own called the "The Mummer's Dance" and "Erector." The reception was

topped of by guest speaker Dr. Adolfo Bermeo, Assistant Vice Provost for Student Diversity at UCLA. He gave an empowering and humorous speech about his connections to the San Fernando Valley and he strongly urged all students to consider transferring and help build a better future.

"In this room there is a future doctor, teacher, political leader that will make a difference to transform the San Fernando Valley to a place that we want our children to live in," Bermeo said.

Adoption

CONT'D FROM PAGE ONE

me. I now knew who I was and where I came from. At that moment, I knew I would never feel empty again."

After Johnson completes the summer semester, she will be permanently moving to Northern California to be near her birth mother. Johnson's adopted mother is also moving to the coastal area of Northern California upon her retirement. Johnson's adopted father passed away in 1984 of cancer. Johnson is an only child in her adopted family.

Johnson's daughter, Caitlin, is looking forward to being near her newfound family and several relatives in Sacramento. "When a child is separated at birth, there's a broken bond which causes

feelings of rejection and loss," Johnson said. "If these feelings aren't discussed and validated they continue into adulthood. As an adoption therapist, I want to help adoptees overcome their feelings of abandonment."

Johnson's hope is that other adult adoptee, students at Valley College will have courage to pursue seeking out their birthparent.

"By finding my birth mother, I'm finally able to get on with my life without all of these questions hanging over my head. I've always wondered where I came from, and now I know. It's a wonderful feeling to have that knowledge," Johnson said.

See Campus Scene for info

Campus

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CSLA
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for more info call
947-2646 or visit
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SCENE

ADOPTION INFO

Johnson organized with a co-sponsor, The Kinship Center, an Adoptee Support Conference that will be held on July 14, 2001.

There is a \$65 registration fee to cover all materials needed. The deadline for registration is May 5, 2001. Johnson can be reached at her e-mail address at kjohnson1970@earthlink.net and at (818) 786-8652 <http://expage.com/conference2001>, Johnson will also speak at the Adoptee Support Conference and tell her story.

WORKSHOP

"How to Choose a Major" held in the Career/Transfer Center. Sign-up in advance. Monday, April 23 at 6pm Tuesday, April 24 at 1pm Tuesday, May 1 at 1pm Wednesday, May 2 at 6pm For more info call 947-2646

UCLA 2nd ANNUAL-STOMP TRANSFER CONFERENCE

will highlight a variety of strategies and resources needed to successfully transfer on Friday, April 27 at 8:30AM in the UCLA Ackerman Grand Ballroom. For more info contact Alejandra Flores or Marialina Garcia at (310) 206-8118

MUSIC EVENTS

April 19 Recitals
11:30am at the Music Recital Hall
Elaine Litster- Harp
Sheila Zimmerman-Flute.
LAVC Jazz Band
Thursday April 26 in Music Room 112 at 11:30 am.
Valley Symphony Orchestra
A Pops Concert for All
Saturday April 28 at 8pm in The Little Theatre. Admission fee.

VOLUNTEER FAIR

and Agency Focus Group Meeting hosted by the Service Learning Program Wed. May 2 at 10-1pm in Monarch Square with a forum following from 1:30-3pm.

SPORTS

Men's Baseball Valley vs. Citrus at home April 24, at 2:30 pm

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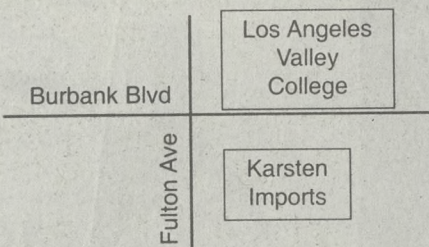
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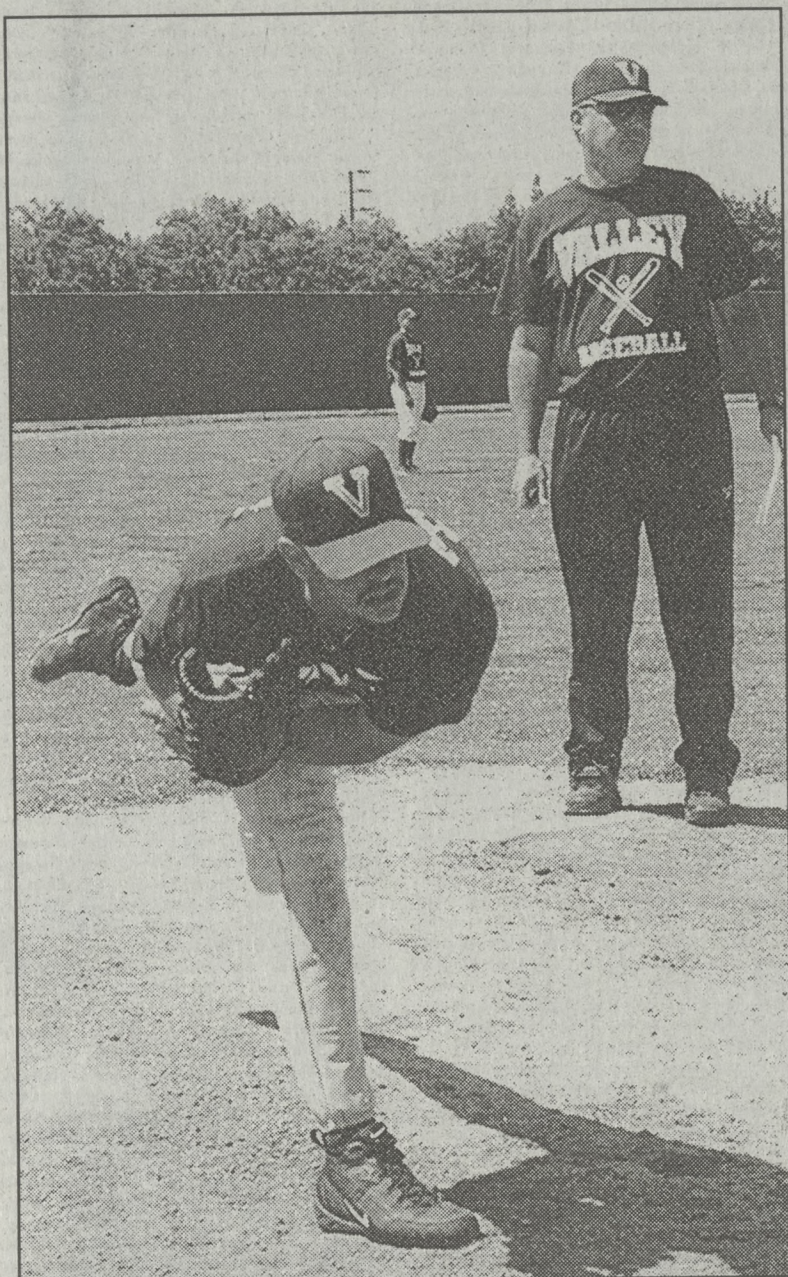
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Coach Johnson watches as pitcher follows through with a pitch to the catcher.

Lisa Tobin/Valley Star

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Monarch Athletics Upcoming Games and Meets

(Home games noted in bold)

Western State Conference Baseball 2001

April 19 Canyons 2:30 p.m.

April 20 L.A. Pierce 2:30 p.m.

April 21 Canyons 1 p.m.

Western State Conference Women's Softball 2001

April 19 Canyons 2:30 p.m.

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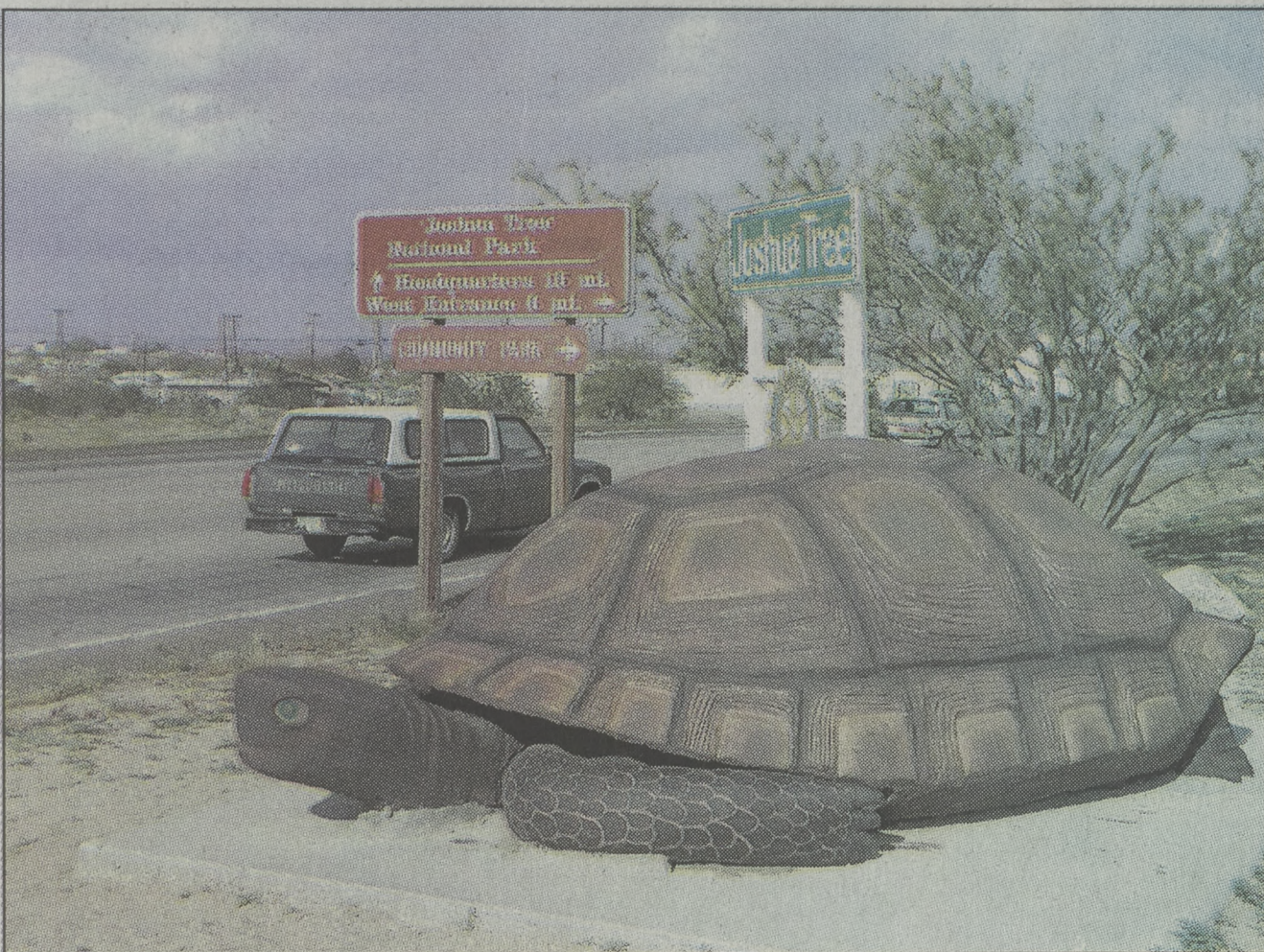
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ESCAPE FROM LOS ANGELES

How two students spent their Spring Break

My friend Marcy and I (Samantha), students at Valley College, ventured out alone on an adventure bound for Joshua Tree National Park. Along the way there are signs of unpleasant weather, but that can't put a damper on our fun. Once we exited I10E and were driving along on peaceful I62, we came across a large turtle on the roadside. This we had to have a picture of (first picture above).

Near sundown we finally arrived at the Hidden Valley Campground and to our dismay, there were no sites available. Our only choice was to find other campers to share a site with. We stumbled upon a group of young gentlemen. Feeling generous, they allowed us to set up camp. We finished just in time to take pictures before the sunlight disappeared. The golden hour was upon us (second picture moving clockwise from the top).

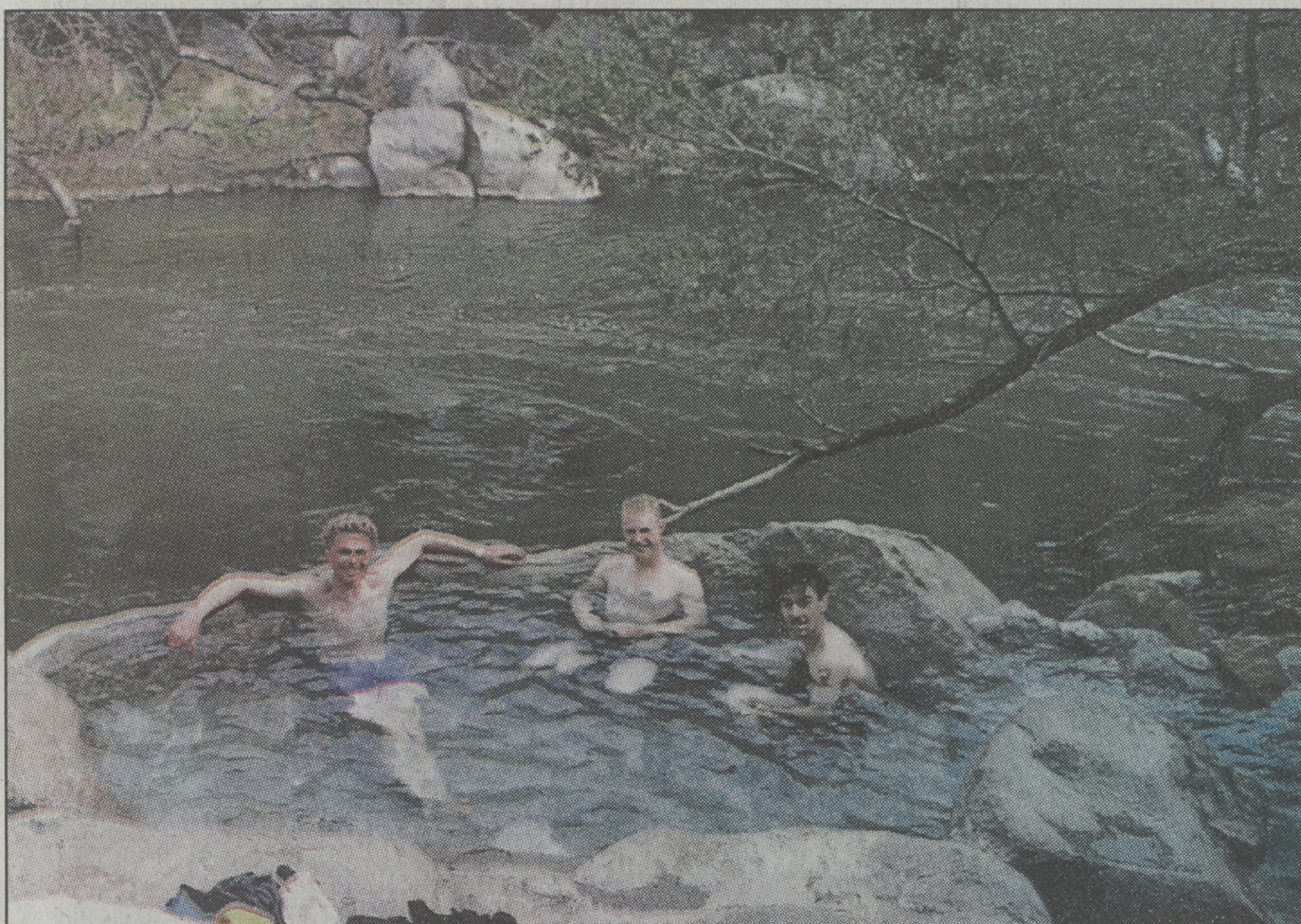
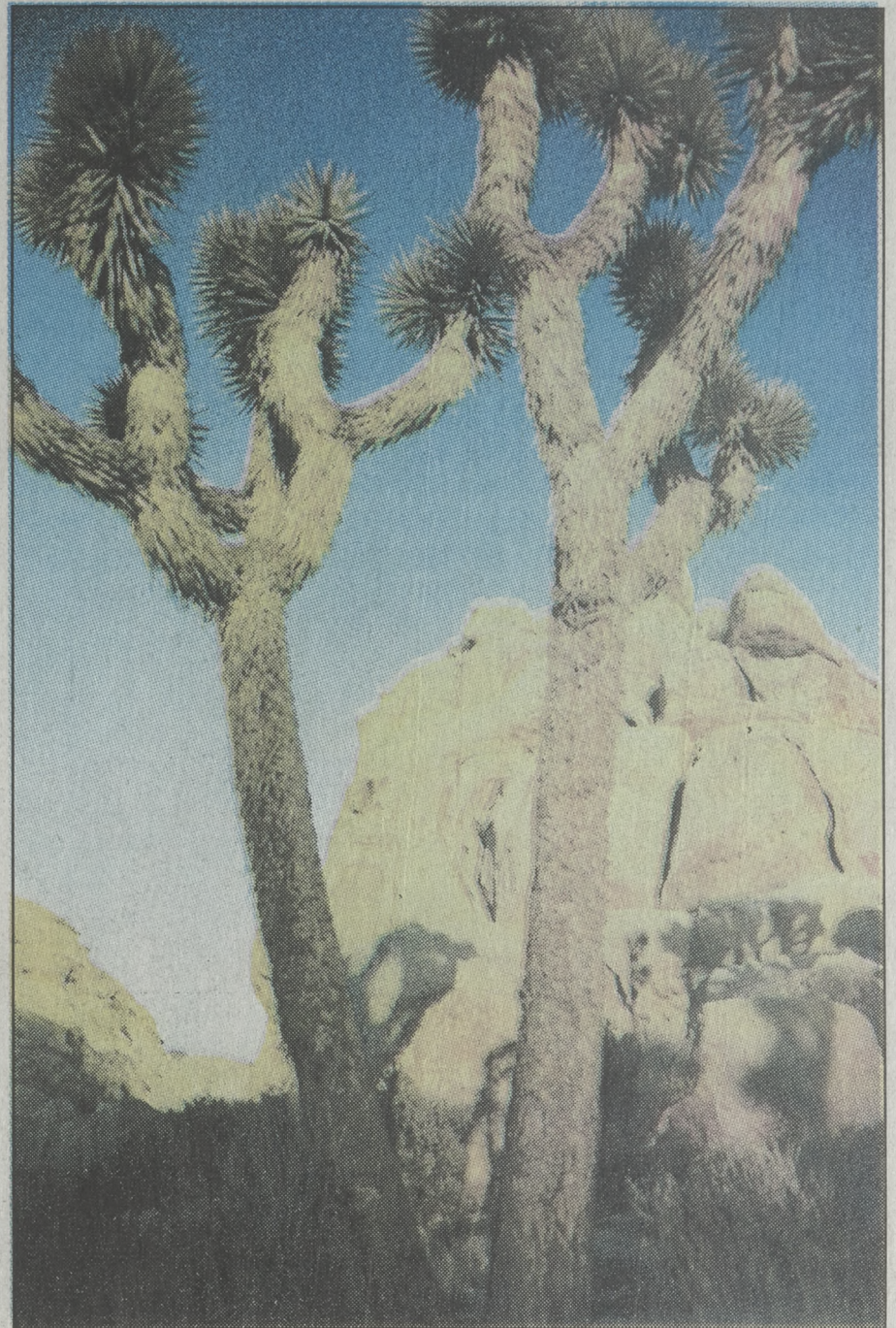
After sunset we built a fire and pulled out the necessary ingredients for smores: graham crackers, chocolate and marshmallows toasted by the fire (at right).

After two days of cold winds at Joshua Tree, the adventure takes a spontaneous turn and all five of us decide to journey to Sequoia National Park's Miracle Hot Springs in beautiful Kern County, California. The exodus took nearly five hours and dropped us northwest of Los Angeles.

En route to the Kern, we drive down Weed Patch Highway a desolate road running through the deserted towns of Mayfair, Fuller Acres and Weed Patch proper outside of Bakersfield. We stop to stretch and buy some necessities (bottom right).

We arrive at the campground near the hot springs and we're ready to relax. Pictured below is the posse minus the girls, from left to right, Sean, Brendan, and Jason soaking in the mineral springs.

After two days of soaking up the sun and the clean fresh air we pack up and return to smog laden Los Angeles and the daily grind.



Marcy Petrique/for the Valley Star



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